

October 31, 1997

For more information, contact:
Bob Rowe - 406-444-6167

MISSOULA EXPANDED LOCAL CALLING REGION TAKES EFFECT NOVEMBER 7

The Missoula local calling area is about to get bigger. U S West Communications will implement extended area service, or EAS, in the Missoula region November 7. As a result, calls that were long-distance calls between Missoula, Frenchtown, East Missoula, Florence, Darby, Hamilton, Stevensville and Victor will now be local calls. EAS will create a local calling region of about 60,000 customers in the Missoula region served by U S West.

U S West customers' local phone rates will increase by \$2.55 per month to allow the company to recover its lost long-distance revenue and its costs to implement EAS. However, customers can keep their phone bills close to existing rates or even less if they choose to subscribe to one of the two less expensive measured service options.

Under the basic measured service option, a residential customer's monthly local service rate is \$8.90, plus one cent per minute for outgoing local calls within the EAS region. The other measured-service option provides residential customers with a three-hour block of local calling usage each month for the monthly rate of \$10.40. Outgoing local calls above the three-hour block are billed at one cent per minute. Most customers should be able to save money on their monthly local U S West bill compared to their current bill by switching.

Customers who want to try out measured service may switch to either of the measured-service options at no charge until March 1998 and switch back to regular flat-rate service at no charge until September 1998.

The Missoula EAS region is the last of seven EAS regions approved by the Public Service Commission to be implemented in Montana. Other EAS regions are the U S West-served areas around Great Falls, Billings, Helena, Butte, Bozeman and Yellowstone Park. Additionally, West Glacier, which is served by U S West, was added to the existing Flathead Valley local calling area served by PTI Communications.

###